



Discovery 2000 Today!

ISSUE NUMBER THREE

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2000

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE GENERAL CONFERENCE

September 11 - 15, 2000

St. Louis, Missouri

E X P E R I E N C E



Y O U R A M E R I C A

On-Site Web Development Team Works to Bring Discovery 2000 to Parks



*Dave, Steve, Deb,
and Jeff are serious
about bringing
Discovery 2000 to a
park near you!*

W E D N E S D A Y

E D U C A T I O N

8:00 a.m. Opening Plenary
Keynote address by
Maya Angelou

9:35 a.m. Break

10:00 a.m. Education Sessions

11:30 a.m. Lunch

SPECIAL PROGRAM

**12 NOON - A Talk and reading
by Author Scott Russell
Sanders—"Stories of Place"** -
Sanders will read selections from
his books that evoke his home
ground in the rural Midwest and
discuss the role of stories in
conveying a sense of place.
(Mississippi Room)

1:00 p.m. Education Sessions

2:30 p.m. Break

3:00 p.m. Closing Plenary
Quiet Riot

6:30 p.m. Laclede's Landing
Street Fair

Even those who couldn't attend the *Discovery 2000* conference are able to keep up with the proceedings in almost real time thanks to impressive work by a special NPS cyber SWAT team.

Each day's speeches, events and summaries of discussion groups are posted on the special conference website along with photos and copies of this newsletter. The journey of information through the World Wide Web begins from a small room dubbed "The Web Klubhouse" in a remote part of the Regal Riverfront Hotel, which serves as conference headquarters.

In a dimly lit room littered with empty coffee cups and overflowing wastebaskets sits a bank of five computers linked to a temporary network as well as to the main NPS web page.

The web team assembled just for this event consists of Dave Gilbert, web manager for Harpers Ferry Center, Steve Pittleman, the Park Service's Washington-based webmaster, Deb Smith, staff assistant in the Director's office whose specialty is editing,

and Jeff Selleck, a writer-editor with the Natural Resource Program Center in Denver and editor of *Park Science*.

The team began posting conference reports Sunday night after spending a long day setting up equipment and loading software. Team leader Gilbert had already organized the site to handle conference registration for the nearly 1,300 participants. Now that the conference is under way, the site is updated three or four times a day.

There is strong evidence people are clicking in. On the first day of the conference, the site got more than 4,460 hits, ranking it 15th among more than 500 NPS web directories. There must be a lot of employees back home checking up on their colleagues!

This is a high-tech meeting, from the exhibits by private vendors to the registration database to the 30 computers loaned by Dell Computer Corporation just to record summaries of discussion groups. "I'm impressed with how people have used technology at this conference," said Pittleman.

WRITERS' DESK



Author John McPhee once wrote, "Alaska runs off the edge of the imagination." And certainly that marvelous place has inspired another author to explore the outer limits of his own imagination.

Richard Nelson, a nature writer and cultural anthropologist who lives in Sitka, excited a packed house Tuesday about the land he loves and the links among the native peoples of Alaska and all creatures great and small.

Nelson noted the state's 14 national park sites contain 70 percent of the national park system's total of 80 million acres, much of it still utterly pristine. "Every plant and animal known to exist when Europeans arrived in Alaska are still there with the exception of the sea cows, a kind of northern manatee that was wiped out by the Russians," he said.

Nelson noted that native tribes in the north country believe that the "proper role of humankind is toward service to and an obedience to the natural world." He said Alaska's parklands are a gift to us by countless generations of Native American people.

"These lands belong to us, or better put, these are lands that we all belong to," he said.

Maya Angelou Promises to Inspire Thoughtful Reflection at Education Track

When planning began for *Discovery 2000* and talk turned to keynote speakers, Maya Angelou was one of the first names to be suggested, said Martha Aikens, track leader for today's Education Track.

"No matter how you describe education or what your perspective on education might be, Maya is one of the standout people," she said.

Angelou was born in St. Louis, and her early career focused on drama and dance, and included a tour of Europe in a production of *Porgy and Bess*. In the early 1960s, she lived in Egypt where she was associate editor of *The Arab Observer* in Cairo. During that period of her career, she was also associated with the School of Drama and Dance at the University of Ghana.

Returning to the United States, Angelou became the northern coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference led by Martin Luther King, Jr. She served on the American Bicentennial Commission and the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year. Angelou has taught at several universities including the University of California at Los Angeles and the University of Kansas. She currently holds the lifetime chair as Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University. Among her many academic honors are a Yale University Fellowship and being named a Rockefeller Foundation Scholar in Italy.

Although a poet and dramatist, Ms. Angelou is dedicated to the art of biography. She has written five biographical works, the first of which is *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. The book was nominated for the National Book Award. Her books are widely read and taught at schools and universities today.

In 1993, Ms. Angelou became the second poet to be invited to speak at a Presidential inauguration. Her poem "On the Pulse of Morning" directed national attention to the



Photo by Steve Dunwell

human failings pervading American history and a renewed national commitment to unity and social improvement.

"She causes us to think about things differently, about the traditional concepts associated with education, and in fact, who are the real educators," said Aikens, who is also cochair of the *Discovery 2000* Team. That ability is particularly important at *Discovery 2000*, where the focus is on the National Park Service's role in the new century. Park Service people "have to think of ourselves and the Service as educators, and certainly see that role in the future. Who better (to be the keynote speaker) than someone as notable as Maya?"

**Lift up your eyes
Upon this day breaking for you.
Give birth again
To the dream.**

—Maya Angelou,
"On the Pulse of Morning"
Spoken at the Presidential
Inauguration Ceremony
January 20, 1993

Experience Your America at Historic Laclede's Landing



Cobblestone streets add to the ambiance of the Laclede's Landing Street Fair.

Laclede's Landing is the site of the original settlement of St. Louis and retains many of the commercial buildings from the mid-1800's, but tonight's gathering will be a thoroughly modern affair with merchants along the cobblestone First and Second streets offering drinks, burgers, chicken wings, meatballs and desserts, plus entertainment from two stages.

If you registered for the Laclede's event, you have received a coupon book with \$24 worth of tickets good toward meals and drinks. If you don't have coupons (or are considering more than \$24 in libations!), you can use regular cash and plastic. Free jazz, blues, ragtime, and rock music will be provided on two stages throughout the evening.

Laclede's is a modest walk from most of the downtown hotels. Bus transportation will also be provided. Buses leave hotels

beginning at 6 p.m. and run continuously until 8 p.m. Buses will return to hotels beginning at 9:30 p.m. and will stop no later than 11 p.m.



Laclede's is named for the French-born Pierre Laclede Liguist who came up the Mississippi River to build a fur trading post in 1763. He laid out the streets and governed the area until 1765.

Laclede's modern life began in 1976 when the nine-block district was placed on the National Register for Historic Places, making it among the earliest historic districts to use federal tax incentives for historic preservation.

By 1988, nearly one-third of the architecturally significant structures had been rehabilitated and certified by the NPS as eligible for nearly \$2.5 million in tax incentives.

Don't forget to wear comfortable shoes!

N E W S

Quilts to New Mexico

"From Our Family to Yours" has a goal of giving a homemade quilt to each family that lost a home during the Cerro Grande fire last May in New Mexico. This personal touch will help these families recover, rebuild their lives, and to show we care. You can sign on, or get questions answered by contacting Jeri Mihalic at 209-372-8825, or at jeri_mihalic@nps.gov.

Free Coffee!

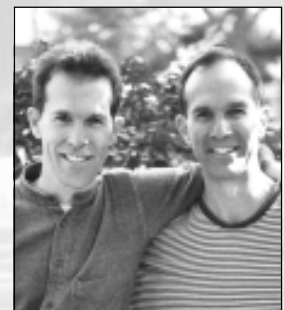
Not every participant has found the four FREE coffee stations that are available in Expo 2000. The coffee is shade-grown, meaning it's grown under the forest canopies of Central and South America thereby preserving habitat for migrating birds and other species. Expo is open through 1 p.m. today.

Picture This!

The alumni of Jefferson National Expansion Memorial are meeting for a photo on the east steps of the Old Court House at 4:50 p.m. on Thursday.

Raffle Winners

The National Park Foundation polo shirt raffle winners are Danette Woo from Fire Island N.S., Michael Creasey from Blackstone River N.H.C., Steve Iobst from Grand Teton N.P. and Diana Maxwell of the NPS Natural Resource Program Center.



Quiet Riot performs at 3:00 p.m. today

Aahh Wilderness!

Although the National Park Service resisted the first drafts and ultimate passage of the Wilderness Act, the agency today manages more acreage of wilderness than any other organization. Nearly 55 percent of NPS lands are designated wilderness, with many more acres still under consideration to be designated. Yet, even today, NPS culture still resists the idea and requirements of wilderness, according to much of the discussion in yesterday's breakout session, "NPS Wilderness: Preserving the Very Best of America's Public Lands."

Bill Meadows, executive director of the Wilderness Society, said, "I submit the NPS has failed on a large scale to discharge its wilderness responsibilities." From power lines cutting across wild landscapes, to the growl of chainsaws, much of the group's discussion revolved around if, and how, the NPS has systematically failed to protect wilderness values and resources. Much of the impetus for wilderness designation has been to protect the parks from shortsighted National Park Service development plans.

Jon Jarvis, superintendent of Mount Rainier, listed issues that will continue to dominate twenty-first century wilderness discussions. How do we deal with cultural resources and structures in designated wilderness? What does "wilderness values" really mean? Which is a higher priority: intrinsic values or human values? Should technology, such as cell phones and GPS units, be a part of wilderness?

Wilderness cannot be managed in isolation with the surrounding landscape, but must inherently be linked with other landscapes, and even with other park activities, such as educational programs. Nonprofit organizations, like the Wilderness Society and the National Parks Conservation Association, assured the group that they stand ready to assist the NPS in its wilderness programs.

Serving as Stewards of Ancient Heritage in the "Century of the Environment"



Mike Soukup, Jerry Rogers, and Roger Kennedy consider Dr. E.O. Wilson's address.

A trio of speakers laid out the threats and promises that changes bring to the stewardship of the natural world before conference attendees Tuesday morning.

"We will lose the wildness, the very nature of our parks if we don't understand them, speak authoritatively for them, and don't know how to restore them" Mike Soukup warned as he kicked off the Natural Resource track opening plenary.

The national parks are our treasure house of the remnant natural ecosystems.

—Dr. E.O. Wilson

Roger Kennedy stirred the crowd as he introduced the morning's keynote speaker. "Resource protection that hides in the woods and does its thing shyly, silently and without explaining what its doing is not protection at all," according to the former NPS Director. "It will have no constituency."

Dr. Edward O. Wilson said he believes this is a crucial time for the National Park Service and for the environment in general.

"The planet could easily lose a quarter of its plant and animal species in the next 30 years" said Dr. Wilson. He sees the "growing importance of national parks in this

country and elsewhere for scientific research, education and the future of society."

Wilson firmly believes "the national parks are our treasure house of the remnant natural ecosystems" and as such need to be thoroughly understood. He says the "absurdly under-funded Service" is ideally suited for its role as the nation's baseline ecosystems.

Wilson foresees a future of increased research in collaboration with an academic world that increasingly recognizes the parks and the NPS as a major force in research. In



his opinion, projects such as the inventory at Great Smoky Mountains will help us recognize the importance of the smallest living organisms as we seek sustainable biodiversity.

Wilson advocates increased education to compliment the research efforts. He said "there's no better classroom than our national parks, and no more respected teachers" than the people of the National Park Service.

Dick Sellars applauded Dr. Wilson's inclusion of "deep history" in his remarks. The historian appreciated "the complexity of his subject and the issues" surrounding natural resource management issues facing Service. Voyagers natural resource manager Roger Andrascik found it "heartening to have someone of Dr. Wilson's stature recognize and validate our concerns and needs". "Inspirational and thought provoking" were words Suzanne Barrett from the Great Smokies used in reflecting on the address. She said his remarks "tend to motivate us, and remind us what others think about us and what we do well."

America's Treasures and Fire Management in the 21st Century

Following an opening presentation by panelists on the practice of prescribed fire, problems associated with prescribed fires at several parks (particularly Bandelier NM), and draft revisions to the Service's prescribed fire management policies, participants discussed ways to improve the prescribed fire management program. A number of recommendations emerged:

- Assure that resource management and fire suppression are "married" in the new policy, combining the expertise of professionals in those two communities.
- Continue to educate the media, park neighbors, elected officials, the public in general and children in particular on the uses of prescribed fire. There was a consensus that improved education is probably the most significant step we can take. The media is already more knowledgeable as a result of efforts stemming from the 1988 Yellowstone fires. Attention also needs to be paid to educating park staffs and managers.
- Expand the interpretation of prescribed fire through programs, waysides, pamphlets and other educational materials. Not enough is being done at present and there is a need for materials. Harpers Ferry Center needs to be active in this process.
- Better utilize trained NPS staff on fires (not everyone who was qualified was called out this summer) and improve resource sharing.
- Use every tool available to manage forests, not just prescribed fire. Mechanical thinning needs to be an option, but approached with caution due to serious ecological, political and other considerations.
- Hold a national "fire summit" on prescribed fire policy to ensure that best practices are employed. Take an approach to fires in ecosystems that focuses on the ecosystem, not differing agency mandates – a single approach should be utilized rather than several often differing approaches.

How Can We Increase Awareness of the Natural World with a Population Psychologically Removed from Wild Land?

This was posed to participants Tuesday at a natural resources track session entitled, "How Will a Public Far Removed from Resources Relate to the NPS Mission?"

Attendees divided into two camps—those who felt the best way to address the issue was through education of today's youth, and those who felt the solution was in influencing those with the authority and power to direct the agency from within. Considerations included growing metropolitan areas, changing ethnic diversity, and impacts of technology on all of our lives.

Theorists suggest that partnerships must be developed to educate the "high tech" public about the "high touch" parks. Others advocate that constituents must be developed to influence governors, regulators, industry leaders, and scientists to support agency efforts.

Some felt a need to develop a comprehensive vision for our education program, because so many youth today aren't even aware of parks. Others felt a need to focus on developing strong partnerships outside parks because the NPS is becoming less isolated—and more a part of a nationwide system of parks, including state and local organizations.

Begging pardon for the military reference, one admitted battlefield-oriented attendee stated, "It's like fighting a two-front war, and we don't have the resources in the agency to do that."

Although lively discussion could have continued for hours, if not into the night, one participant summed up the dilemma by asking, "If we save the parks but lose the world, have we really accomplished our mission?"

Winning in Court

It was standing room only in "Natural Resources: Winning in parks, in the courts, and for the public" when two guys with beards we wouldn't have trusted in the 60s shared collective wisdom. "There's a greater risk in not being consistent," Yellowstone Superintendent Mike Finley said and urged the crowd to "adapt an attitude of rigid defense."

Solicitor Dave Watts and Finley agreed that there is value beyond the dollars spent investing in fact gathering. "I can't overemphasize that you live or die on what you know or don't know," Watts said during his primer on Administrative Procedures.

Jake Hoogland, NEPA coordinator and session moderator, hailed the concept of being prepared for lawsuits.

"How we perform – with attorneys, reporters, and judges – forms our reputations," Finley added.

Finley challenged Walt Dabney, director of the Texas Park System, to share lessons learned on the recent Canyonlands court decision saying the lawsuit "refocused" the NPS on its mission and resulted in new policy. Dabney described how he, as former superintendent, used the legislative history and the GMP to decide to close a year round spring to four wheel drive vehicles.

The lively discussion questioned whether there were opportunities in waiting to be sued or seeking lawsuits when park resources were in jeopardy.

Watt concluded with three guiding principles: fund data gathering; keep an eye on new policies; and engage in long term legal planning now. "You know where the alligators are," he said.

Outreach Starts in Our Own NPS Back Yards

It is big and ugly. It's rising up just outside your park boundary. A hotel in bright pink adobe. A two-story mini-mansion with a freshly cut road and a flashy red roof. With 19 million acres of once-rural lands becoming urban in the two decades between 1970 and 1990, these and other nightmares and could soon be yours if they are not already. They are one vision of the future, but probably not the one you want.

How to mitigate these and other problems associated with a burgeoning population and bustling gateway communities was the topic of a session yesterday morning entitled "Direct Dealings: Working with Park Neighbors of the Future." Presenters Rich Gregory, Warren Brown and Larry Gamble began by talking about how parks are increasingly encroached upon, how this trend will continue, and how park managers can work with communities to preserve both park and community values.

"If your job is influencing how the character of the land around you takes form, you have to earn a right to have a seat at the table," said Brian O'Neill, Superintendent of Golden Gate National Recreation Area during an intense discussion. "Outreach to the local community is critical to establishing the trust necessary to have a productive working relationship," O'Neill said.

However, he conceded that outreach is only half the job.

"You have to communicate to the staff that we're not just in the business of managing the park, but also how the community around the park develops," he said.

Dr. Peter Raven Outlines Recommendations for NPS Future

Peter Raven spoke to *Discovery 2000* participants in an afternoon plenary session yesterday. Dr. Raven is an internationally renowned botanist and the director of the Missouri Botanical Gardens.

Raven urged the NPS to make the national parks accessible and meaningful to every segment of the U.S. population. He discussed the effects of discrimination on society, and received an ovation when he said, "Discrimination, whether overt or covert, whether active or passive, is not only immoral or wrong, it is incredibly stupid."

Discrimination whether overt or covert, whether active or passive, is not only immoral or wrong, it is incredibly stupid.

—Dr. Peter Raven

Raven outlined eight recommendations:

1. A scientific staff in every park is critical to adequately manage resources.
2. NPS should clearly and unequivocally adopt a goal of managing parks for the greatest amount of biodiversity possible.
3. NPS needs to pay special attention to invasive species.
4. NPS needs to receive adequate funding to do its job.
5. There must be increased coordination with other land management agencies and the private sector.
6. NPS and Interior Department must invest further in understanding global climate change and other forms of pollution coming from beyond boundaries.
7. The greatest value of the national parks is going to be in the educational arena. The nearly 300 million visitors are one of the agency's greatest assets.
8. Work with foreign countries to help them understand the similar problems they are confronting.



Dr. E. O. Wilson and Dr. Peter Raven drew a round of applause from an engaged audience.

Colloquium

Concluding the afternoon, Dr. Peter Raven and Dr. E.O Wilson responded to questions submitted by conference participants. The scholars answered a variety of questions ranging from a critique of the Endangered Species Act to which scientific fields students today should study. When asked how the national parks will fit into humanity's future, Dr. Wilson responded (much to audience's delight), "The national parks will be very vital for the long-term psychological health of the human species." The two drew applause and laughter from an audience that sat on the edge of their seats throughout much of the provocative dialogue.

N P S R E U N I O N



NPS Urban Intake Trainees from the late 60s and early 70s with former Director Bill Whalen.

FEATURED ESSAY

By Charles Wohlforth

At park headquarters, they're thinking about resource management and wildlife biology. In the campground, they're thinking about hand soap.

There are two worlds within each National Park. That's one of the lessons I've learned as a journalist, covering the parks first as a daily newspaper reporter and then as author of a book, *Frommer's Family Vacations in the National Parks*.

As a reporter, I identified with the headquarters, reading the latest planning documents and following the latest controversy about preservation, restoration or park use.

Then, as an author, I began traveling to parks all over the country with my own three kids. Now I became more concerned with the policies at the campgrounds, the ease of the reservation system, and how to find hikes that were easy enough for my kids but not too easy.

And I started to wonder if the folks at the headquarters should start thinking more from the family's point of view.

At Yellowstone, the concessionaire put soap and paper towels in the campground bathrooms, making life infinitely easier for family campers. Wouldn't the camping fees of \$12 or more pay for soap in other parks? (At the same time, some Yellowstone cabins have deteriorated into shameful vacation slums.)

At Denali, a wonderful transportation system protects the heart of the park and keeps the wildlife wild as nowhere else. Couldn't the park also have found a way to educate visitors to understand the system, cutting the lines, frustration and disappointment at the visitor center ticket desk?

On a national level and at many individual parks the NPS offers volumes of useful information on the Internet. Couldn't parks also install Internet kiosks so visitors could access this information after they arrive?

The parks are run well; they are fulfilling their dual mission of preservation and enjoyment by the public. But I think each park superintendent should take a week a year to camp out with his or her kids, just like regular folks, and see things from our point of view for a while.

. . . I started to wonder if the folks at the headquarters should start thinking more from the family's point of view.

Find out why it is important to preserve the environment at the campground as well as in the backcountry – unlike at Yosemite, where a policy allowing firewood gathering outside the valley has left some campgrounds denuded and barren.

Find out why programs aimed at families need to take kids into account—unlike campfires that begin at 9:30 p.m. in many parks, or Junior Ranger programs made up of word-search puzzles and other busy work that teach little about nature.

And find out what it's like to drive around and around in a first-come, first-served campground hoping you can snag a site when someone leaves—with a car full of unhappy kids.

Superintendents should keep their eyes on the big picture. But please put soap in the bathrooms, too.

—Charles Wohlforth is the author of *Frommer's Family Vacations in the National Parks and lives in Anchorage, Alaska.*

USE IT or LOSE IT?

Are the only inappropriate park uses those that impair park resources and values?

Chris Schafer, WASO Air Resources Division Chief, and Chick Fagan of WASO Policy opened the session with background on appropriate use and with the question, "Will current NPS guidance suffice in the 21st century?"

Group discussion brought forth a variety of viewpoints:

- The NPS needs to educate the public about the realness, authenticity of national parks.
- The NPS needs to better articulate why some park uses are appropriate and some are not.
- Parks should be ready to suggest alternative locations to requesters.
- Some parks require requesters to explain why their activity/event must be done in the park, what they will do to prevent resource impairment.
- Before we can criticize others, the NPS must submit itself to the same standards it requires of permittees. Examples were use of 2-cycle engines, recycling, fuel spills, sewer treatment, and leaky equipment.
- Parks must be held accountable—is there a lack of conscience?
- NPS should be an environmental leader through its actions.
- The NPS truly has one mission: conserve the resources and allow for visitor enjoyment within that context. We often hurt ourselves by over-debating our dual mission of conservation and visitor enjoyment.
- Uses outside boundaries affect parks as much or more than uses inside boundaries. Parks should work closely with communities to promote conservation.
- The NPS has little involvement in long-term research and is missing opportunities. Parks should plan for the scientific needs of the future. Park data is needed for world-wide research.



EXPERIENCE
YOUR
AMERICA

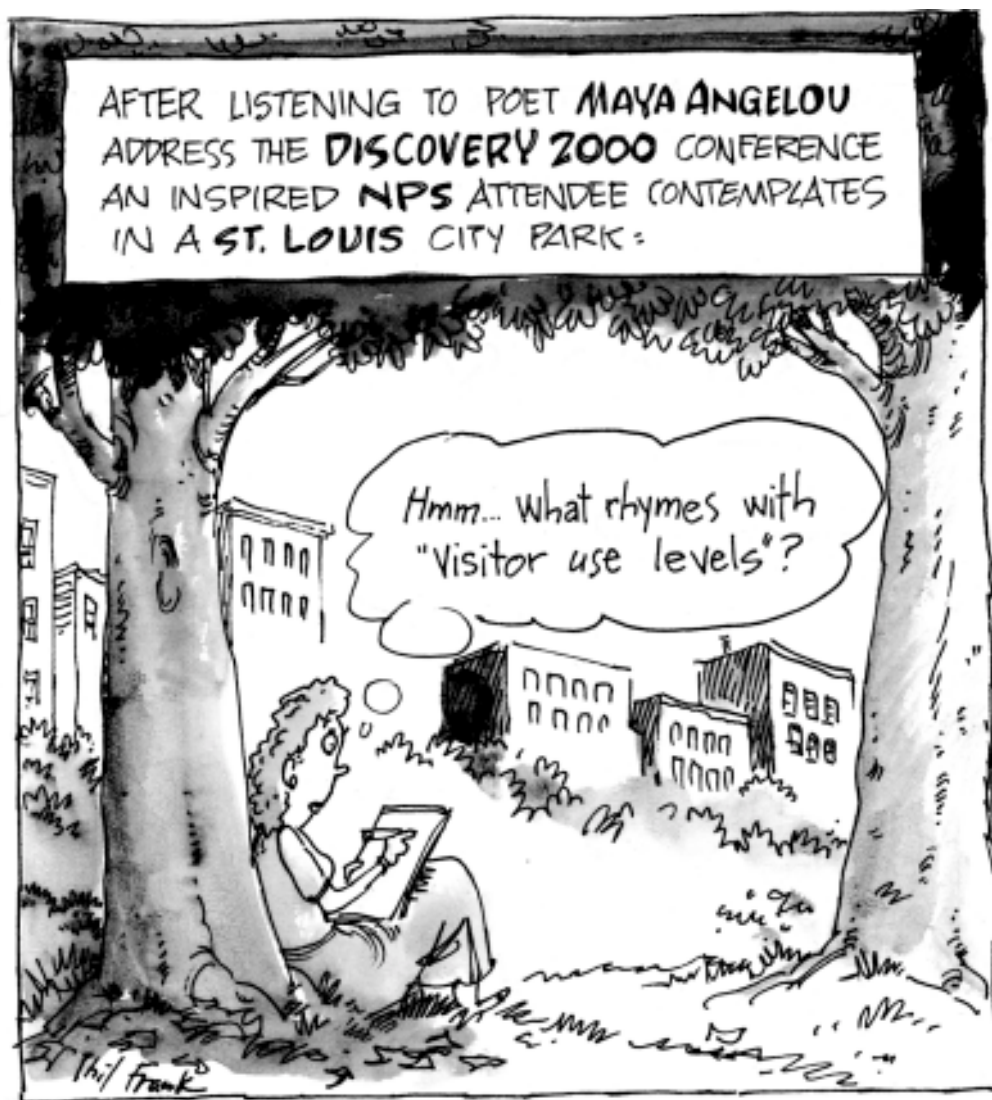
The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Compass Award



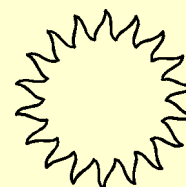
The Brunton Company is saluting two NPS employees for outstanding achievements in earth sciences and fossil resource protection. Andrew Valdez, a geologist at Great Sand Dunes, and Vincent Santucci, chief ranger at Fossil Butte. Brunton representative David Glenn made the award Tuesday afternoon to Intermountain Regional Director Karen Wade who will pass the awards on the recipients. The awards consist of a plaque and a personalized Brunton pocket transit.

• Q U I T E F R A N K L Y •



WEDNESDAY'S WEATHER

September 13, 2000



Sunny and a high near 80 degrees and southeast winds from 5 to 15 mph. Wednesday night will be partly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms late. The low will reach into the lower 60s.

THURSDAY'S WEATHER

September 14, 2000



Showers and thunderstorms are likely. The high will be around 80 degrees and the chance for rain is 60 percent.

A R T S A L E

Phil Frank's original cartoons are available for sale beginning today beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the National Park Foundation exhibit. The five cartoons are priced at \$200 each. Payment should be made to the National Park Foundation, and all the proceeds will be returned to the artist.